

### Why is housing important?

Stable, affordable and safe housing is critical for good health. Limited high-quality housing stock forces many Ohioans into housing situations that expose them to long-term negative health outcomes.<sup>1</sup> For example:

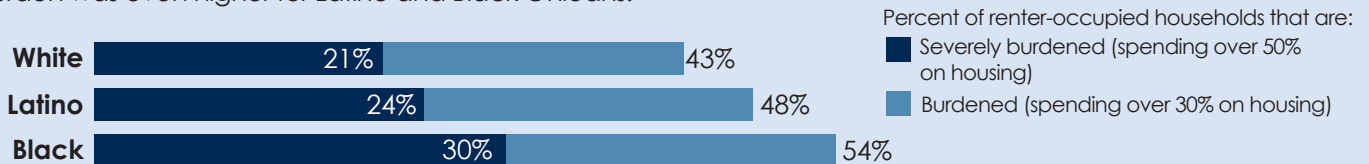
- High housing costs and poor housing quality (e.g., overcrowded or dilapidated housing) contribute to toxic and persistent stress,<sup>2</sup> which can lead to high blood pressure and other negative health outcomes.<sup>3</sup>
- Greater access to affordable housing reduces the number of Ohioans spending significant portions of their income on rent, increasing their ability to pay for other necessities, such as food and health care.<sup>4</sup>
- Safe and affordable housing can improve birth outcomes and reduce infant mortality disparities through reduced toxic stress<sup>5</sup>, an increased ability to afford health care and other improved health factors.<sup>6</sup>

### How does affordable housing affect health equity?

Quality, affordable housing is vital for Ohio families to maintain stable employment and long-term health. Low wages, a lack of safe and affordable housing and the impacts of racism and housing discrimination result in many Ohioans spending a significant portion of their income on poor quality housing in neighborhoods that are disconnected from necessary resources, including high quality health care and high paying jobs.<sup>7</sup>

#### Affordability

About one-fifth of white Ohio renters (21%) spent over 50% of their income on housing in 2017. This housing cost burden was even higher for Latino and Black Ohioans.



Source: "Housing Burden. Ohio." National Equity Atlas. Accessed Mar. 8, 2021.

#### Low wages

Many workers were not paid enough to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at fair market rent (FMR) in Ohio (fiscal year 2020).

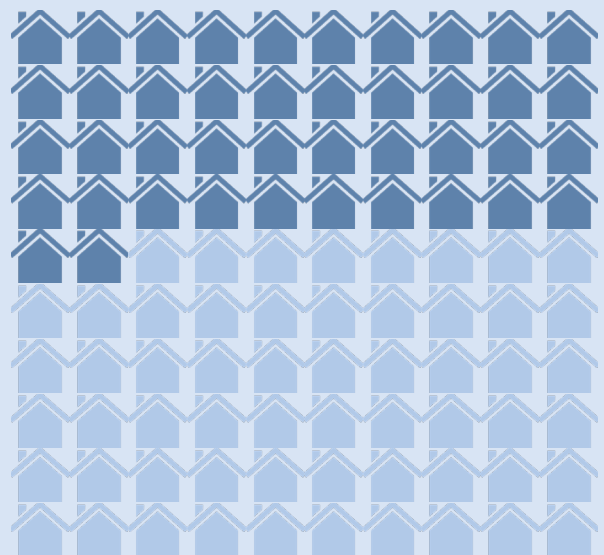
##### Median hourly wage



Source: "Out of Reach 2020: Ohio." National Low Income Housing Coalition. Accessed Mar. 16, 2021.

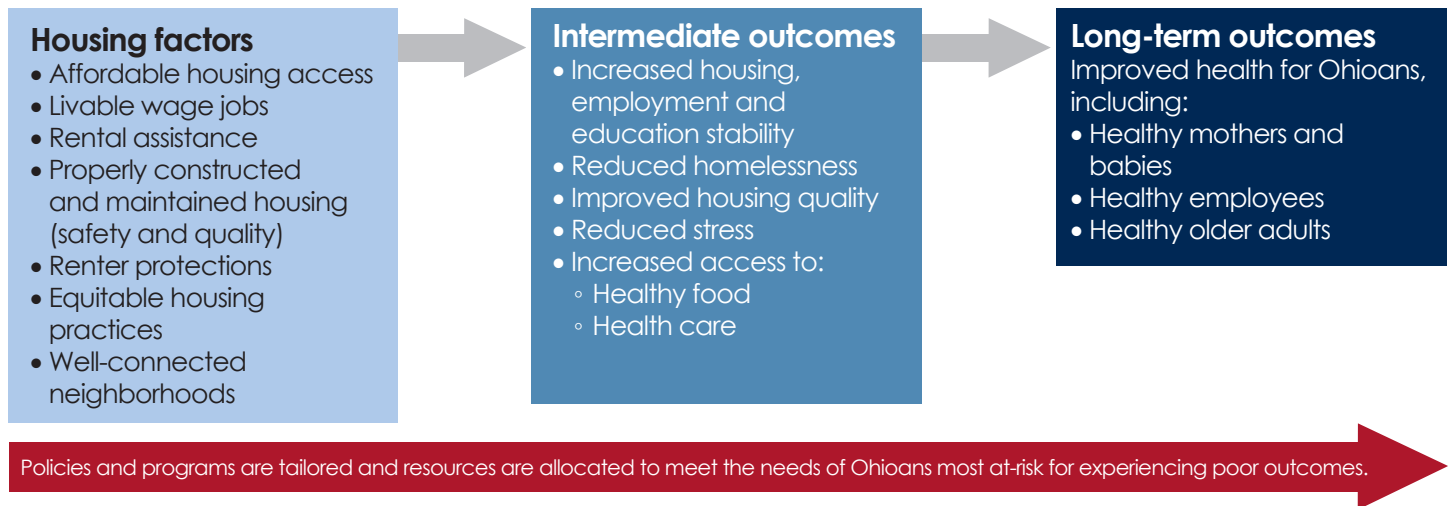
#### Housing scarcity

There were only 42 affordable rental units for every 100 renter households with incomes at or below the poverty line or 30% area median income in Ohio in 2019.



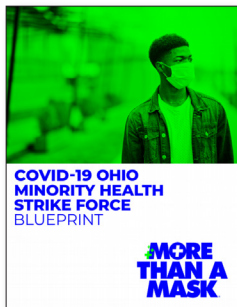
Source: "The Gap: Ohio." National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2021

## What is the relationship between housing and health?

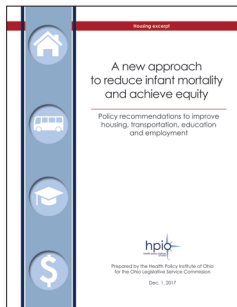


## How can state policymakers support housing equity?

To promote equity and support the health of all Ohioans, Ohio policymakers can strengthen affordable housing access in all communities by fully implementing evidence-based recommendations in existing state plans:



**COVID-19 Ohio Minority Health Strike Force Blueprint**  
Ohio Governor's Office



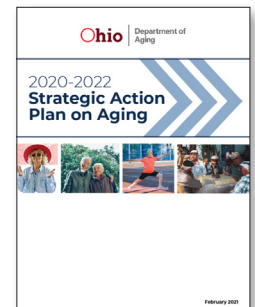
**A New Approach to Reduce Infant Mortality and Achieve Equity: Policy Recommendations to Improve Housing**  
Ohio Legislative Service Commission



**Healthy Moms and Babies: Housing and Health Integration: Research Findings and Recommendations for Policymakers**  
CelebrateOne



**2020-2022 State Health Improvement Plan**  
Ohio Department of Health



**2020-2022 Strategic Action Plan on Aging**  
Ohio Department of Aging

### Notes

1. A new approach to reduce infant mortality and achieve equity: Policy recommendations to improve housing. Columbus, OH: Ohio Legislative Service Commission, 2017. [https://www.healthpolicyohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/SDOIM\\_Final\\_HousingExcerpt.pdf](https://www.healthpolicyohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/SDOIM_Final_HousingExcerpt.pdf)
2. Ibid
3. Health Policy Institute of Ohio. "Connections between racism and health. Taking action to eliminate racism and advance equity," August 2020.
4. A new approach to reduce infant mortality and achieve equity: Policy recommendations to improve housing. Columbus, OH: Ohio Legislative Service Commission, 2017. [https://www.healthpolicyohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/SDOIM\\_Final\\_HousingExcerpt.pdf](https://www.healthpolicyohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/SDOIM_Final_HousingExcerpt.pdf)
5. Ibid
6. Healthy Moms and Babies: Housing and Health Integration: Research Findings and Recommendations for Policymakers. Columbus, OH: CelebrateOne, 2020. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/53206c76e4b0da7cd7fb9716/t/606359f9eefc803e71f6dd6c/1617123839137/CO+Policy+Brief+v8.pdf>
7. A new approach to reduce infant mortality and achieve equity: Policy recommendations to improve housing. Columbus, OH: Ohio Legislative Service Commission, 2017. [https://www.healthpolicyohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/SDOIM\\_Final\\_HousingExcerpt.pdf](https://www.healthpolicyohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/SDOIM_Final_HousingExcerpt.pdf)

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